



SHAPE THE FUTURE



A LETTER FROM OUR GEO AND BOARD CHAIR

The future is never certain, but here at BBBSChi, we're preparing for our best year yet. As you'll see in our Annual Impact Report, the agency is definitely trending for the better. Not only is the future something to be excited about for BBBSChi as a whole, but something we're helping the children we serve prepare to meet head on as they move into the next stage of their lives.

2024 was a year of embracing change and new beginnings, from opening four new neighborhood offices to moving our HQ downtown. This past year was transformational for both our staff, partners, and the young people across Chicagoland that we serve, and, together, we're ready to make 2025 BBBSChi's biggest year yet.

With our new regional footprint, we've already been able to increase our local partnerships, engage with more families and volunteers, and provide children in the program with access to the resources they need to fulfill their potential. Thanks to you, we've expanded our reach, doubling down in communities with the greatest need for mentors, and are heading into the new year matching two kids off the waitlist per day.

In this report you'll read about the Bigs, Littles, families, staff, Board members, and fellow supporters & partners who work every day to create connection and make a difference in the lives of children across Chicagoland. It is thanks to supporters like you that make this mission grow. Thank you for your dedication and shared commitment to helping kids in our community thrive.

We are truly Bigger Together,

Jeremy Foster
President and CEO

Rob Hallberg Board Chair

OUR MISSION

Create and support one-to-one mentoring relationships that ignite the power and promise of youth.

OUR VISION

All youth achieve their full potential.



HAVING SOMEONE WHO GENUINELY WANTS TO BE THERE FOR YOU AND LISTEN TO YOU WITH NO JUDGEMENT...IT'S BEEN THE BEST EXPERIENCE OF MY LIFE."

-Little Morgan







1,316

Life-Changing Mentoring Relationships

Youth,
Volunteers &
Families
Impacted

4.559

86%

of Littles built and grew positive relations with peers



89%

of Littles maintained or strengthened their grades and school engagement



95%

of senior Littles graduated high school with a plan for their future (2-4 year college/university, trades, military or job training)



BIG FUTURES

This year, BBBSChi launched BIG FUTURES, opening up our service offerings to support a critical transition period for current and alumni Littles. Open to youth between the ages of 14 and 21, BIG FUTURES equips participants with the tools and opportunities necessary for future success - whether that be exploring career paths, pursuing life skills, or preparing for post-secondary education.

Empowering Youth for Future Success

As part of BIG FUTURES, we launched Teen Center Saturdays, a monthly event designed to provide a safe and supportive space for youth to gather, socialize, and engage in a variety of activities. Through these events, BBBSChi will host workshops from resume building to mock interviews and field trips from museums to college campuses.

At BBBSChi, we understand that each Little's journey is unique. It's why our program is tailored to present a wide range of opportunities and career pathways, ensuring that each young person can make informed decisions about their future. And we believe that with the right support and resources, our youth can confidently transition into adulthood ready to achieve their personal and professional goals.

15%

Littles experience 15% higher lifetime earnings.*

20%

Littles are 20% more likely to apply to college.*

4

Source: The Long-Term Impacts of Mentors: Evidence from Experimental & Administrative Data, Alex Bell and Neviana Petkova (2024)

BBBS HAS ALWAYS BEEN ABOUT PREPARING YOUTH FOR FUTURE SUCECSS. WITH BIG FUTURES WE'RE MEETING KIDS WHERE THEY ARE AND TEACHING EVERY YOUNG PERSON THE SKILLS THEY NEED TO SUCCEED IN THEIR CAREER AND LIFE AFTER HIGH SCHOOL."

BIG LEADERSHIP

THE LEADERSHIP BOARD - INVESTING IN THE NEXT GENERATION OF LEADERS

In addition to hosting the 12th Annual Big
Bash event, BBBSChi's young professional's
Board leaned into the agency's various
initiatives to recruit and develop future
mentors. Through personal outreach to
potential volunteers and hosting
neighborhood happy hour events, the
Leadership Board teamed up with BBBSChi's
Black Advisory Council to focus on two
specific recruitment challenges: bringing in
more Bigs of color and serving areas where
the majority of our waitlisted youth reside.



THE BIGS LEADERSHIP COUNCIL - VOLUNTEER VOICE AND BUILDING COMMUNITY



Composed of volunteer mentors, the Bigs Leadership Council (BLC) provides feedback, ideas and insight to advise BBBSChi programming and enhance both the Big and Little experience. In its first year, the BLC hosted several match outings, from ice skating at Maggie Daley Park to brewery stops for Bigs to connect. The BLC also held quarterly forums — one featuring a panel of Little's parents and another featuring mental health and therapy professionals to help Bigs best support their Littles.



At Big Brothers Big Sisters, we work to create meaningful connections and experiences that stay with a child for a lifetime. As kids are facing new challenges every day, BBBS' mentoring programs counter the impact of negative experiences with positive role models and opportunities. We are able to provide these opportunities through the generous support of our donors, partners and two unique initiatives: The Match Enrichment Fund and The Akesh Experience.

THE MATCH ENRICHMENT FUND

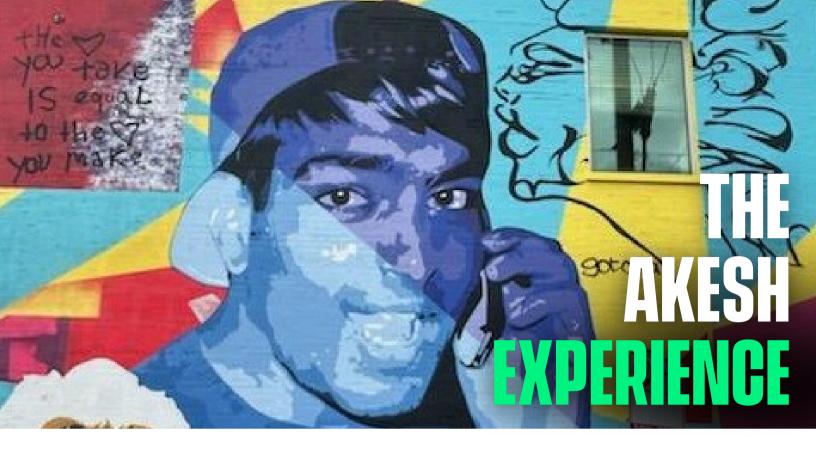
Designed to support enrichment activities for Bigs and Littles to enhance and strengthen their relationship.



Little Joshua was in the midst of the college decision process, but hadn't been able to visit and experience a college campus. His Big Brother Andy turned to the Match Enrichment Fund to put together a special outing to visit Joshua's top choice university. He loved exploring the campus, getting to see the diverse student body, and noted the chicken fingers at the dining hall were particularly good! Joshua was accepted and will be back on campus this fall to study Psychology. He is looking forward to having Andy's continued guidance as he takes this next step into his future.



In their 3+ years matched, Rickeyah and her Big Sister Amy have bonded over watching sports together, especially DePaul women's volleyball and basketball receiving tickets from the Match Enrichment Fund. Rickeyah was inspired by the athletes on the court competing and performing, and through the Akesh Experience, enrolled in the DePaul Youth Dance and Cheer Clinic. Amy watched her Little shine as she took to the court during a recent halftime show performance. This experience ignited such a love for the school that Rickeyah came home to her mom exclaiming "I'm going to DePaul University." With pride, Rickeyah's mom replied, "Let's get you through 5th grade first!"



The Akesh Experience pays tribute to the life of Akesh Yelavarthy, who loved to experience all that Chicago has to offer. The fund provides access to unique outings and creates once-in-a-lifetime experiences for BBBSChi matches.





Reana and her Big Sister Rachel have been matched for more than five years and explored neighborhoods all across Chicago, but they also dream of adventuring beyond the city they call home. The Akesh Experience provided the perfect opportunity, as Rachel presented Cubs tickets to Reana for an away game! In one day, they caught an early flight to St. Louis, visited the Arch, grabbed some BBQ and watched the Cubs take on the Cardinals. Reana learned about planning and budgeting for a trip, navigating an airport and facing the fear of her first flight. She even got a special congratulations from the flight deck over the loudspeaker and says she will cherish these memories with her Big for the rest of her life!



BIG CELEBRATIONS

BBBSChi's 2024 Events Brought in Over \$1,100,000 to Drive Our Growth

Night of Champions



The BBBSChi Board of Directors' "un-gala gala" brought in over \$300,000 to create and support matches like our Match of the Year, Chris and Mason, who took center stage that evening. Mark and Mary Ann Kaufman have presented this event since its inception: hosting everywhere from their own backyard to 2024's 18th Annual event at Soldier Field.

Big Bash



Over 400 guests gathered at Venue West for music, dancing, casino games and themed cocktails, raising over \$150,000 and making this 2024 Leadership Board event our most successful one yet!



Graduation



We celebrated our graduating class of around 80 matches and their families, awarded the Alvin H. Baum Brighter Futures Scholarships, and watched Littles Sam and Briana surprise their Bigs with the 2024 Big of the Year award.



BIGS OF THE YEAR

This year we were honored to award two Big of the Year recipients Jackie Malone and Andy Watt with words from their Littles, Briana and Sam:

JACKIE HAS ALWAYS ENCOURAGED ME TO BE MY BEST. NO MATTER WHAT."

-Little Sister Briana

OF ALL THE MEMORABLE OUTINGS AND MILESTONES
WE'VE SHARED, IT'S HONESTLY JUST BEING TOGETHER
THAT I LOVE THE MOST.

-Little Brother Sam





MASON HAS CHANGED BECAUSE CHRIS BELIEVES IN HIM. HE HAS A SENSE OF THE FUTURE BECAUSE CHRIS PROVIDED A NEW PERSPECTIVE AND A SAFE SPACE FOR MASON TO ACHIEVE SOMETHING GREAT."

-Mason's Mom Diana

MATCH OF THE YEAR

Mason and Chris met right before the pandemic lockdown, transitioning immediately to virtual outings, and then adapting every step of the way — becoming more connected and ingrained in each other's lives. Now, living just a few blocks away from each other, they take any opportunity to build meaningful experiences together: from working on a car and practicing guitar to celebrating an 8th grade graduation and a commitment to be there for each other through all of life's changes and challenges.

BIG MOMENTS



2024 brought new and expanded partnerships to help us continue to provide holistic support for our youth and families. Here are just a handful of the many activations that lifted up BBBSChi's unique wraparound services.



BACK TO SCHOOL WITH THE TOOLS TO SUCCEED

Thanks to our sponsor and friends at Heitman, we were able to celebrate the new school year with over 200 matches and families in a back-to-school cookout. Employees put together a truck load of school supplies and delivered hundreds of stocked backpacks to ensure Littles were prepared.



PATHWAYS TO OPPORTUNITY

Through the Deloitte Foundation and BBBS America, BBBSChi was able to provide Youth Equity & Empowerment Scholarships to graduating Littles pursuing careers in STEM, finance and economics.



MENTAL WELL-BEING SUPPORT

The Ulta Beauty Charitable Foundation leaned into our efforts to prioritize mental health and well-being, activating self-care clinics, wellness kits, and a round-up campaign throughout Mental Health Awareness Month.



CAREER CONVERSATIONS AND A DAY OF MIRACLES

Littles had the opportunity to participate in CIBC Chicago's 2nd Annual Miracle Day, which raises funds for community organizations that remove barriers for youth to achieve their dreams. Littles participated in career conversations with a panel of CIBC employees and enjoyed the day's festivities, from performances to athlete meet-and-greets, all highlighting the importance of community partnerships in driving positive change.



BBBSChi matches helped kick off the holiday season from Chicago to NYC — lighting the Macy's Great Tree on State St. and singing in the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade. Macy's continued to bring their holiday magic, hosting Littles for shopping sprees and breakfasts.



Being a mentor and experiencing things with a child gives you such renewed energy. Kids give us hope for the world to keep becoming a better place."

-Big Sister Christine



MEET-UP WITH DA BEARS

Whether it was on or off season, the Chicago Bears and Bears Care engaged Bigs and Littles in everything from bowling tournaments to game days, practices at Halas Hall and mentorship huddles with their favorite athletes.



CAREER EMPOWERMENT AND EXPOSURE

Knowing the power of mentorship for young professionals, KPMG invited BBBSChi Littles into their Empower High School Experience, an enriching three-week internship exploring the world of accounting and professional services.



AND FOR THAT REASON. I'M IN

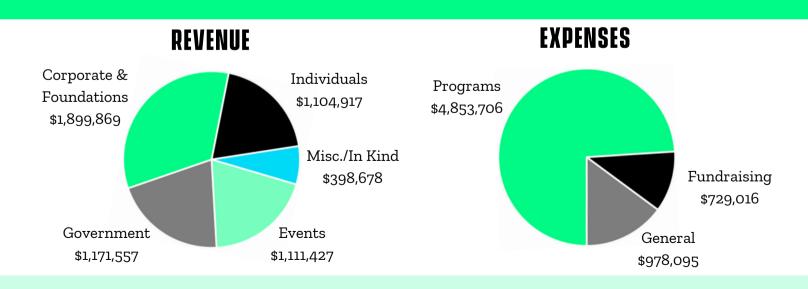
Our partners at West Monroe hosted Littles during their Day of Service for a Shark Tank inspired workshop. Littles learned about entrepreneurship and came up with digital products incorporating AI and other technologies before presenting them to a panel of judges and winning awards!



PHILANTRHOPIC SUPPORT

\$5,686,448

In FY2024, BBBSChi's total net assets were \$3,458,380. To view our full financial report and form 990, please click here.



IT TAKES A VILLAGE. VIEW OURS:

Individual Donors

Tribute Donors

Match Makers

Dedicated Partners

JBH Legacy Fund

Board and Leadership



LOOKING FOR NEW WAYS TO JOIN THE MISSION?

Thank you to everyone who has leaned into this mission and created big moments for matches - from their first meeting to each impactful conversation, outing and experience along the way. We could not do this without the village of Bigs, Littles, families, staff, donors, partners, Board members and advocates that drive BBBSChi one step closer to ensuring every child has a plan for their future and a positive mentor by their side.



Post on your social media site of choice about your mentoring experience and tag us <code>@BBBSChi</code>.



Sign up to be a Match Maker and make a monthly donation of any amount at bbbschgo.org/matchmakers to help change a child's life every month.



Consider naming Big Brothers Big Sisters of Metro Chicago in your will or estate plan. Your commitment to the future of BBBS will have a lasting impact on our community.

Please let us know about your intentions, or learn more by contacting David Gee at gee@bbbschgo.org or 312.207.5601.

TOGETHER WE EMPOWER POTENTIAL





@BBBSChi

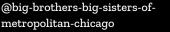


@BBBSChi



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ITTAKES LITTLE TO BEBIG

